



# Town of Amherst Voters Guide



**Please bring this with you to the polls on *March 8, 2011*  
at Souhegan High School between 6 AM and 8 PM**

*Dear Fellow Residents of Amherst:*

*The first portion of the annual Town Meeting took place on February 9th, with approximately 175 voters in attendance. The meeting began with the announcement by Town Moderator Bob Schaumann that after 24 years of service this would be his last meeting as he will be moving from Amherst. His skill and wit in running a meeting will certainly be missed and we wish him well. As the meeting continued, there were lengthy debates regarding the method the library budget is presented to the voters, the manner the town should fund the Health and Human Service agencies, and some last minute changes in the way the State interprets the town’s Land Use Change Tax Fund. These discussions as well as deliberations on the remaining articles were lively yet the meeting still wrapped up around 10:30 PM. It is a privilege to be able to participate in such an open process that produces the final articles that you will find on the ballot when you participate in the second portion of Town Meeting. Your chance to cast your vote on these important issues, within the privacy of the voting booth, is Tuesday, March 8<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 AM to 8:00 PM at the Souhegan High School. We strongly encourage you to research the issues and make your statement concerning the future of Amherst by voting on Tuesday.*

*The enclosed guide is the effort by your Board of Selectmen to help you have a clearer understanding of what each article is proposing to accomplish. We understand that legal requirements cause each article to be written in sometimes complex language which frequently can serve to confuse us on the actual intent. This is even more valid for people who may not have been actively involved in the discussion that led to the creation or amendment of a particular article. This guide is meant to explain in common language the intent of each article, as well as to offer some background information on the topic. This guide supplements the annual Town Report which is now available at the Town Hall, the Library, and the Police Station. Should you have any questions regarding your town government after reviewing these documents, we urge you to contact Town Administrator Gary MacGuire (673-6041 x209, GMacGuire@AmherstNH.gov)) or any of the Board members (info available at [www.AmherstNH.gov](http://www.AmherstNH.gov)). We would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.*

*The Selectmen have spent many hours this year working with our town Department Heads, as well as the dedicated members of your Ways and Means Committee in creating a spending plan that seeks to address issues within our town over multiple years, lessening the impact to the taxpayer. The recent economic climate has made it difficult to “stay the course” in addressing necessary purchases and repairs to maintain our infrastructure and equipment. The budget and warrant articles that were created this year contain incremental increases that begin to address our needs and will ultimately create a balanced spending plan to prevent future spikes. We made tough decisions to forgo adding any additional personnel, as well as to decline any wage scale adjustment on behalf of our existing personnel for the second consecutive year. It was an unusually long and arduous budget process this year; however we are pleased with the final results. We urge you to become better educated on all the issues, make your informed decisions, and please come to the Souhegan High School on Tuesday, March 8<sup>th</sup> to cast your vote.*

*We would like to express our sincere appreciation to our employees, our Ways and Means Committee, and the citizens who participated in the process that has produced the warrant that is in front of you this year. We could not have been as effective without each of them. We would also like to thank you for the opportunity to represent you, and we appreciate your support as we work together to preserve Amherst as a great community to live in.*

*Sincerely,*

**The Board of Selectmen**

*George Infanti, Chairman*

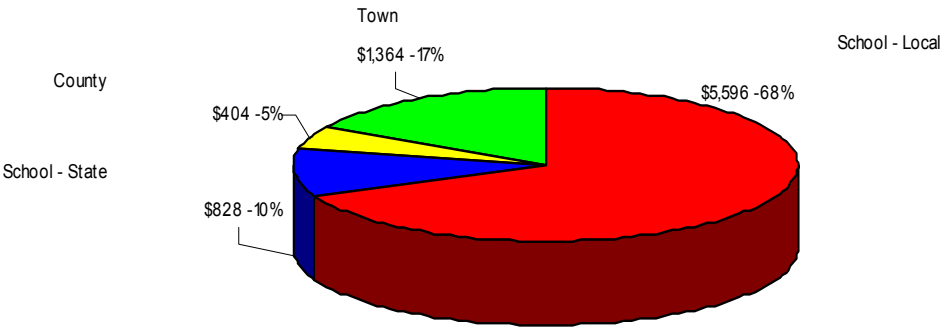
*Bruce Bowler, Vice Chairman*

*Tom Grella*

*Jim O’Mara*

*Dwight Brew*

**\$400,000 House - Property Tax Allocation  
\$8192 Total Taxes Paid at Current Rate**



TOWN WARRANT ARTICLES

ARTICLE 22

Bridge Replacement Bond

To see if the town will raise and appropriate the sum of two million, one hundred thousand, two hundred sixty dollars (\$2,100,260) (gross budget) to reconstruct three bridges red listed by New Hampshire Department of Transportation during annual inspections, more particularly identified as Bridge #109/090 (New Boston Road over Beaver Brook), Bridge #134/100 (Manchester Road over Beaver Brook) and Bridge #060/158 (Horace Greeley Road over Pulpit Brook) and to authorize the issuance of bonds or notes therefore of not more than two million, one hundred thousand, two hundred sixty dollars (\$2,100,260) in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33) and to authorize the Selectmen to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon and other conditions of the bonds or notes in their judgment. This is a special Article in accordance with RSA 32. 3/5 Ballot Vote Required

The Board of Selectmen unanimously recommends a yes vote.

Amherst has fourteen bridges that the town must maintain. Currently three of those bridges are Red Listed by the state who uses a Rating Scale of **one** (bridge closed) through **nine** (no deficiencies). The New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) administers a program that can provide 80% funding for the replacement of deficient bridges. With many municipalities in the state suffering from aging infrastructure, as well as reduced funding at the state level, the timeframe for obtaining this 80% funding is 10 to 12 years from now. The process to even get on the “waiting list” is lengthy and in December of 2009, the Town made initial application to NHDOT for preliminary estimate bridge aid. In April 2010, the State responded with both construction estimates and when the town could expect its eighty percent (80%) per project, bridge aid reimbursement.

Two of Amherst’s three Red Listed bridges are severely rusted large diameter culverts. The load capacity has already been reduced on the Manchester Road Bridge (rated 3 on the scale “Serious”) over Beaver Brook to “Ten Ton Load Limit” with further restrictions possible. The most recent

inspection of the Horace Greeley Road Bridge (rated 4 on the scale “Poor”) over Pulpit Brook showed it is in danger of soon being weight restricted or closed. The third bridge, New Boston Road (rated 2 on the scale “Critical”) over Beaver Brook, received approximately \$28,000 worth of town emergency repairs this past fall and awaits further work this summer as well as additional state inspections. All three structures will continue to be monitored by town and state officials for additional signs of deterioration or settlement.

The passage of this bond allows the town to be proactive by selecting an engineering firm, perform design work, and obtain state/federal permits in 2011. This would allow construction on the most severely damaged bridge to begin during the summer of 2012. This approach would hopefully avoid the prolonged road closures and long detours currently seen in one of our neighboring towns.

The cost of the bridge replacements would initially be paid for by this bond, however that does not negate the ability of the town to collect the 80% reimbursement from the state in approximately 10 plus years. The tax impact on a \$400,000 assessed property for the total cost of this bond is estimated at \$61 in the first year of the bond, with subsequent years declining. The design and construction process does not allow for this total project to be completed in one fiscal year. Because of this, we intend to only borrow sufficient funds for design and construction that can be accomplished in the coming year, thus reducing the anticipated tax impact.

ARTICLE 23

Operating Budget

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth herein, totaling \$10,346,565. Should this article be defeated the default budget shall be \$10,136,943

which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the town or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. This operating budget warrant article does not include appropriations contained in ANY other warrant articles.

The Board of Selectmen unanimously recommends a yes vote.

The town budget is contained in a warrant article that outlines the cost of providing municipal services in town. The operating budget presented by the Board of Selectmen this year at the Deliberative Town Meeting was \$10,299,569. This amount was increased by the voters at the town meeting on February 9<sup>th</sup> by \$46,996, an amount that was originally contained in Article 34 for Health and Human Service agencies. The proposed operating budget is driven by a handful of increased expenses, the total of which were partially offset by reductions in other areas of the budget. The most significant increase was the aforementioned change in principal and interest costs associated with our road reconstruction bond. This line has increased by \$262,227. In addition, the committee that was instrumental in demonstrating the necessity of the road bond to improve our road infrastructure convinced the Selectmen that it was imperative to expend more funds on yearly road maintenance to prevent our “good” roads from eventually failing and requiring the exorbitant cost of rebuilding. The Selectmen and Ways and Means Committee debated this need and ultimately agreed to increase road maintenance by nearly \$179,000. Though this doesn’t account for the full funding for vital road maintenance, this is a significant step forward in a multi-year plan to return our maintenance program to proper levels. A third factor accounting for the budget increase is a rise in employee health insurance costs of \$110,000. After two consecutive years of managing rising health care costs by passing on significant new expenses to the employee, the decision was made to maintain cost sharing at existing levels while not providing any wage scale adjustment to our valuable town employees. A fourth driver in the increased budget was an additional sum of nearly \$60,000 in the fire department budget. These funds are the first year of a multi-year plan to begin replacing out dated, worn out personal

safety gear for our on-call firefighters who respond to emergencies in town. This gear is protective coats and pants referred to as turn out gear, as well as Self Contained Breathing Apparatus Units that protects our men and women when they enter a burning building. The final significant increase in the proposed budget is nearly \$46,000 to fully fund a state required revaluation of all property in town this coming year. The town has attempted to set aside funds in a capital reserve fund each year so all of the required money would have been available this year without this spike. Unfortunately, the economy has contributed to the voters declining to set aside these funds for the last two years, requiring the expense to be added to the budget for this state mandated project. Collectively, these items and the additional \$46,996 included at the Deliberative Session total over \$700,000. The actual proposed budget increase is approximately \$586,000 as other areas in the budget were trimmed to reduce the tax impact. The tax increase on a \$400,000 assessed property is approximately \$84.

In addition to the proposed operating budget, by statute, this article contains a default budget figure that would go into effect if the voters fail to approve this article. A default budget is defined as the current years’ budget with minor adjustment, including current year one time projects being removed, contractual and other obligation amount adjustments, as well as debt service payments. A default budget allows a town to operate on a budget that is considered ‘status quo.’ This year’s default budget is 3.85% higher than our current budget. The primary reason for this is the default budget contains the debt service payments associated with our road reconstruction bond that was approved by the voters last year. The Selectmen have discussed their options should the voters enact the default budget. With so many obligated increased expenses, they realize that significant reductions in service and/or employee layoffs may be required to operate the town under the default budget. The difference in cost for the owner of a \$400,000 home for the full year between the proposed budget and the default budget is approximately \$45.

ARTICLE 24

Police Union Contract

To see if the Town will vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the

Board of Selectmen and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees Union (Police Union) and to further raise and appropriate the sum of \$81,988 for the current fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits over those of the appropriation at current staffing levels in accordance with the most recent expired collective bargaining agreement paid in the prior fiscal year. Upon approval of this article, additional estimated increase over 2012 costs are to be transferred to the general operating budget of the Police Department. The cost item increases attributable to the new collective bargaining agreement are set forth as follows:

Fiscal Year	Estimated Increase	
2012	Wages	\$63,390
	Benefits	\$18,598
	Total	\$81,988
Fiscal Year	Addtl Estimated Increase	
2013	Wages	\$28,522

Note: Pursuant to the form of RSA 273-A:12 in place at the time of the drafting of this warrant, this collective bargaining agreement, if approved, including the pay plan, but excluding cost of living increases, will continue in force and effect until a new agreement is executed.

The Board of Selectmen unanimously recommends a yes vote.

This article is the result of a lengthy negotiation process between the collective bargaining unit representing the majority of the police department employees, and the Board of Selectmen. The current police contract expired June 30, 2009 and the employees have received no wage increase during that time. Throughout the negotiation process, both sides were determined to find a balance between the needs of the deserving police officers and a result which everyone would find fair and equitable. In addition to the many negotiating sessions this process included mediation and fact finding. Exacerbating the ability to reach an equitable agreement was the depressed economy of the last two years.

Keeping in mind the voters’ message a year ago wherein they resoundingly rejected the fact finder’s recommendations of wage increases far greater than those contained

within this agreement, the Selectmen are very pleased to present to the voters a ratified agreement with the officers which is unanimously supported by the Board, the Way & Means Committee, and the police chief.

The two year agreement will take the place of a contract which expired in 2009. Among other changes, the agreement calls for very modest cost of living increases for the next two years, and one step adjustment, all of which is consistent with changes made in 2009 for other non-union town employees. In essence this contract covers a four year period, providing an average annual increase of 1.6% over the four years. Although there is no provision for retroactive pay, the parties have agreed to a one time payment of \$1,000, recognizing the two years which the police officers have gone without any pay increases. Other changes include an increase in the college incentive stipend, and a provision regarding vacation pay which is designed to reduce the town’s exposure to penalties which the state retirement system can impose on the town in instances where a pension is based upon greater than normal annual wages. The contract also includes another provision to further protect the town from these retirement spiking penalties. Lastly, the health insurance plans and premiums have changed in order to save associated costs.

This agreement will provide competitive wages for our officers, increasing employee retention and reducing costs associated with hiring new officers. Furthermore, it provides the stability of a two year contract, both to the town and the police employees. The cost of this agreement for the owner of a \$400,000 home is \$18 in the first year and \$6 in the second year.

Effective July 1, 2011

- 1% Cost of Living Increase
- Pay system restored & employees placed within it
- New step added for employees previously at the top
- One time bonus of \$1,000 per employee
- Increased employee cost sharing for health insurance
- College degree incentive increased
- Anti-spiking provision added to contract
- Vacation buyout language to further reduce spiking exposure

Effective July 1, 2012

2% Cost of Living Increase

Steps for eligible employees

No other changes or additions

ARTICLE 25

Public Health Mosquito Surveillance and Control Program

*To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Forty Thousand Dollars (\$40,000) to continue with a Public Health Mosquito Surveillance and Control Program. This program is designed to monitor and help prevent the presence of mosquito borne vector diseases in accordance with the state of New Hampshire Arboviral Surveillance, Prevention and Control Guidelines.*

*The Board of Selectmen unanimously recommends a yes vote.*

This article requests funding to continue an additional year of our comprehensive Integrated Pest Management Public Health Mosquito Surveillance and Control Program, in accordance with the State of New Hampshire Arboviral Surveillance, Prevention and Control Guidelines. This program was designed last year to monitor and help prevent the presence of dangerous mosquito borne diseases in Amherst such as West Nile Virus (WNV) and Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE). Our neighboring communities of Goffstown, Bedford, Merrimack and Nashua remain listed as “High Risk” target communities by the NH Division of Public Health for WNV & EEE, which indicates the continual need for comprehensive community intervention. *Integrated Pest Management* (IPM) is an ecosystem based strategy that focuses on long-term prevention of pests (in this case specifically mosquito’s) that contribute to the spread of WNV and/or EEE. Through a combination of techniques such as biological control, habitat manipulation and modification of cultural practices, Amherst can proactively work towards the goal of prevention and control of WNV & EEE.

Treatments are made with the goal of removing only the target mosquito organism. Pest control materials such as the natural occurring bacteria BTi (*Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis*) are selected and applied in a manner that minimizes risks to

human health, beneficial and non-target organisms (honey bees, dragon flies, etc.), and the Amherst environment.

Recurrent 2011 mosquito control program costs include \$5,000 for surveillance and \$35,000 for agent applications and permits. This would allow for a repeated comprehensive approach beginning with surveillance, monitoring, trapping and testing of adult mosquitoes; to treatment of larvae (a major focus of an effective control program) through environmentally friendly agent applications.

After crews assessed Amherst freshwater sites 258 times throughout the 2010 season, technicians identified 81 target larval mosquito habitats and treated 50 sites to eliminate target mosquito larvae. Additionally 693 roadside catch basin treatments were made to help combat disease carrying mosquitoes. Information the Town has received from State Health Officials indicates that EEE and WNV will again be a “High Risk” concern in NH during 2011. The spring 2011 program, if approved, would begin immediately following town meeting in March. This program will be evaluated annually to determine if the Town continues to have concerns about the EEE & West Nile Virus target mosquito population. However, if we all do our part to minimize the spread of WNV & EEE over the next few years, we stand a good chance of suppressing its risk potential, thereby reducing the need for such elaborate control measures and costs in future budgets. This is the primary reason why we have again this year selected to pursue this program via a warrant rather than include it in the current proposed budget.

ARTICLE 26

Lease/Purchase of Rescue/Pumper for Fire Department

*To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectmen to enter into a four year lease/purchase agreement for the purpose of leasing a replacement Rescue/Pumper for the Fire Department, and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$154,223 for the first year’s payment for that purpose. This lease agreement will contain an escape clause. (Majority vote required).*

*The Board of Selectmen unanimously recommends a yes vote.*

The Fire Department’s 1987 fire engine is four years beyond the twenty year replacement schedule and has body, frame, and undercarriage rust that are not cost effective to repair at this time. The truck was originally purchased as a fire engine (pumper) for the purpose of fire suppression, but years later it was equipped with rescue tools including the *jaws of life* to serve a dual role as a rescue vehicle and a pumper. The proposed replacement will be a combination rescue/pumper vehicle that will meet the department needs as well as all current safety standards. A summary of the improvements a replacement vehicle would bring include:

- Increased reliability
- Easier and safer to use
- Increased storage space with optimal design and flexibility.

The improvements in safety for the firefighters include air bags, ABS brakes, integrated seat-belts, rollover protection, independent front suspension, traction control, and improved lighting/visibility, equipment. Some of the functional improvements include an onboard generator and cord reels for lights and power tools, an onboard hydraulic pump and hose reel to rapidly deploy the *jaws of life*, a foam system for enhanced fire extinguishment, and increased storage space for additional tools/equipment. At this time it is estimated the new vehicle will cost \$575,000, though a committee is still working diligently to explore options to reduce that cost. It is anticipated the town will enter into a competitive four year municipal lease purchase agreement with annual payments not to exceed \$154,223. The truck itself will also be put out for competitive bid. The town has an existing fire truck capital reserve fund that could be used for the final payment, saving one year of interest and paying off the agreement in three years.

ARTICLE 27

Funding for Recreation Land Purchase - Transfer from LUCT Fund to Recreation Fields Acquisition and Construction Capital Reserve Fund

*To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$390,000 to be*

*placed into the Recreation Fields Acquisition and Construction Capital Reserve Fund previously established by the passage of Article 10 at the March 2007 annual meeting. Such amount to be transferred from the existing balance of the Land Use Change Tax Fund pursuant to RSA 79-A:25-a, (II). And to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into agreements to acquire properties for recreation purposes as they deem appropriate, on terms and conditions acceptable to the Board of Selectmen, and under the provisions of RSA 41:14-a.*

*This is a non-lapsing Special Warrant Article in accordance with RSA 32.*

***The Board of Selectmen , by a vote of 4-1, recommends a yes vote.***

This article was originally proposed to take \$250,000 from the existing Land Use Change Tax fund, created by the voters in 2001, and transfer it into an existing Capital reserve fund created by the voters in 2007 to acquire and construct recreational fields. Currently the town utilizes Cemetery Fields on Merrimack Road as a location for the Sarah Jean Roy memorial playground, as well as athletic playing fields. Per the original agreement, these facilities would be located on this site until it was required as a municipal cemetery, which will happen in 2014. In light of this, the town has been diligently seeking available land to utilize as a replacement for Cemetery Fields. The transfer of funds from the LUCT fund into this capital reserve account would provide funds that could facilitate this replacement. Any expenditure from this capital reserve account to purchase land could be performed by the Board of Selectmen, after they conduct two public hearings. At the conclusion of the public hearings the voters have the ability to file a petition, signed by fifty voters, that would require the Selectmen to place any proposed purchase on the warrant of the next town meeting for voter approval.

A brief explanation of what the LUCT fund is will be beneficial in explaining issues that have arisen since this article was first proposed. When land is removed from Current Use, a penalty is paid to the town to offset the reduced taxes that had been paid on a particular property while in Current Use. By town meeting vote, these funds are split between a fund utilized for conservation purchases, and the Land Use Change Tax fund which can be used, after town meeting voter approval, for any lawful purpose. This fund was created in 2001 and

was written to allow these funds to accumulate year to year. In both 2007 and 2008, the voters chose to utilize some of these funds for land purchase, construction of the Bean Fields, and completion of the Peabody Mill Environmental Center. The New Hampshire Department of Revenue Administration (DRA) reviews all town warrant articles and issues an opinion to the Town as to whether they appear consistent with applicable statutes. This year the DRA issued an opinion regarding the LUCT Fund that had not been issued during prior reviews in 2001, 2007, and 2008 regarding LUCT articles in Amherst. The DRA opinion disallowed the continued practice of the LUCT fund accumulating from year to year as was approved by the voters in 2001. This ruling dictated that the balance in the LUCT account (approximately \$390,000 at this time) needed to be allocated for expenditure by the voters at this year’s town meeting, or it would return to the general fund after our town meeting. Any funds returned to the general fund are then allocated during the annual tax setting by DRA in the fall to increase the town’s unreserved fund balance (which DRA defines as a measurement of the town’s financial stability), or be used to reduce taxes.

The voters at this year’s deliberative town meeting were advised of this last minute development. Based on this news, an amendment was made from the floor to alter the original article from \$250,000 to \$390,000. In effect this would take the entire existing LUCT fund and direct it to the Recreation capital reserve account. The majority of the Board supports the transfer of these funds. We believe it is essential we continue to explore our community for a suitable playing field replacement land for the inevitable loss of Cemetery Fields. Proactive funding in reasonable increments would have been perhaps a more prudent approach but it was not done. These funds can be transferred to the Recreation Fields Acquisition and Construction Capital Reserve Fund so the community is in a position to act when these rare and unique opportunities to purchase active recreation land present themselves.

ARTICLES 28  
& 29

**Discontinue Cemetery Capital Reserve Fund**

*To see whether the Town will vote, pursuant to RSA 35:16-a, to discontinue the current Cemetery Capital Reserve Fund which contained an ending balance as of June 30, 2010 in the amount of \$ 14,230 with said funds and accumulated interest to date of withdrawal to be transferred to the general fund.*

**Establish Forestview Cemetery Design Expendable Trust**

*To see whether the Town will vote, pursuant to RSA 31:19-a, to establish a new expendable trust account entitled the Forestview Cemetery Design Expendable Trust Fund, in which principal and interest may be expended, for the purpose of defraying the cost of the preparation of plans and specifications for the construction design of the Forestview Cemetery on Merrimack Road, and to name the Trustees of the Cemetery to be agents to expend for the purposes for which the trust was created, and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$ 14,230 towards this purpose, said funds to come from the general fund and deposit the same in said Forestview Cemetery Design Expendable Trust Fund.*

***The Board of Selectmen unanimously recommends a yes vote.***

Both Articles 28 and 29 work together for a single goal but due to legal requirements they must be written as two separate articles. A summary of both will be written here to explain the intended action. The town will require additional cemetery space in the very near future, and in anticipation of this, land was acquired on Merrimack Road many years ago to construct Forestview Cemetery. It is now time to begin design of that future cemetery and funds are required to pay for the required professional services. There is a long standing Cemetery Capital Reserve Fund that contains approximately \$14,000, but it is not specified for use in the design of the new cemetery. By dissolving this fund as proposed in Article 28, and transferring it into an expendable trust as proposed in Article 29, these funds could be used for the design costs of the new cemetery. Support of both of these articles will allow the Cemetery Trustees to continue designing Forestview Cemetery without impacting the taxpayers.

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**The next few articles all involve routine additions to existing capital reserve funds. Capital reserve funds allow for the orderly replacement of failing equipment, vehicles, and buildings without erratic spikes to the budget. They create a system of savings accounts that spreads the cost to the taxpayer over several years. Funds in a capital reserve account can, by law, only be used for the intended purpose that they were established for. The current interpretation of RSA 35:5 requires that these be presented as warrant articles each year for voter approval.**

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ARTICLE 30

Ambulance Capital Reserve

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of twenty-two thousand dollars (\$22,000) to be added to the Ambulance Capital Reserve Fund previously established.

The Board of Selectmen unanimously recommends a yes vote.

Your Emergency Medical Services Department responds to approximately 600 emergency calls each year, utilizing two fully equipped ambulances. This article would add \$22,000 to an existing Capital Reserve Fund established to budget for new replacement ambulances every 10 years. It is estimated that each new ambulance will cost \$165,000, one of which will be delivered late May 2011. Following this purchase the fund has a balance of \$101,323 towards the 2014 purchase of a second replacement ambulance. Funding this article now will allow for the continued level spending program which provides replacement vehicles when they are needed without spiking town expenditures.

ARTICLE 31

Communications Center Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) to be added to the Communications Center Capital Reserve Fund previously established.

The Board of Selectmen unanimously recommends a yes vote.

This article seeks to continue to level fund this capital reserve fund. A capital reserve fund serves as a savings account to address unexpected or emergency repairs/replacements, as well provide funding for upcoming expenses without causing a “spike” to the taxpayer. This capital reserve fund was specifically created by the voters in 2006 for the purpose of purchasing new and/or replacement communications equipment. It currently has a balance of \$15,082.

ARTICLE 32

Town Computer System Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) to be added to the Town Computer System Capital Reserve Fund previously established.

The Board of Selectmen unanimously recommends a yes vote.

This article seeks to continue to level fund this capital reserve fund. A capital reserve fund serves as a savings account to address unexpected or emergency repairs/replacements, as well as provide funding for upcoming expenses without causing a “spike” to the taxpayer. This capital reserve fund was specifically created by the voters in 2006 for the purpose of purchasing major computer system components, critical software updates, and/or emergency computer repairs for all Town Departments. It currently has a balance of \$17,981.

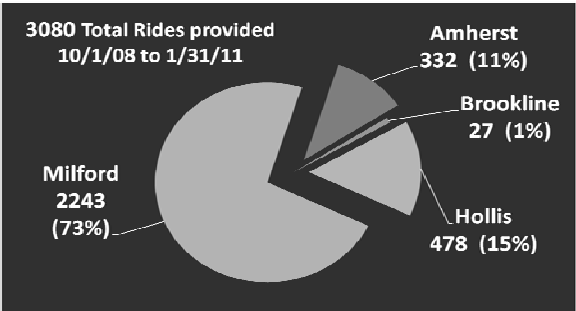
ARTICLE 33

Souhegan Valley Transportation Collaborative Subsidy

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of five thousand five hundred dollars (\$5,500) to support the Souhegan Valley Rides bus service which provides subsidized transportation to qualified individuals including persons in the Town of Amherst.

The Board of Selectmen unanimously recommends a yes vote.

This article seeks to provide a subsidy based on the percentage of Amherst citizens who use this service. This regional collaboration, begun in 2008, serves Milford, Amherst, Brookline and Hollis residents who are in need of transportation assistance for non-emergency healthcare appointments, social service agency appointments or pharmacy errands. It currently provides a door-to-door, shared ride service on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday (8am - 4pm) that is wheelchair and handicapped accessible for a \$2 fare per rider each way. In 2009, the service added rides for shopping to four local shopping plazas on Thursdays. The service helps any of our residents who are unable to drive themselves or find someone who can drive them to appointments.



Town	Percent of service	Current Requests	Previous Requests
Amherst	11%	\$5,500	\$7,500
Brookline	1%	\$500	\$1,500
Hollis	16%	\$8,000	\$10,000
Milford	72%	\$35,000	\$37,137

ARTICLE 34

Health and Human Service Agencies

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of one dollar (\$1) to support the health and human service agencies which provide service to Amherst residents, the amount of the grant and identity of the receiving organization to be determined by the Selectmen as they, in their judgment, deem appropriate. In the event this article passes, the selectmen intend to include this appropriation in future years as a line item in the operating budget.

The Board of Selectmen unanimously recommends a yes vote.

As originally proposed by the Selectmen, this article sought funds to support a broad

group of health and human service agencies that provide service to Amherst residents. The original dollar figure (\$46,996) was arrived at by a Selectmen appointed committee that had reviewed in depth every request made to the town this year. Though the Selectmen supported this expenditure, they also supported this request being contained in a warrant article this year. The basis for this position was that a similar warrant article that was proposed to the voters last year was not supported by a majority of the voters. It was the Selectmen’s position that should the voters support the article this year, they would be in favor of including future requests in the town’s operating budget. The voters at the deliberative town meeting on February 9<sup>th</sup> amended this article to \$1 and also amended the proposed operating budget to include the funds (\$46,996) originally contained in this article.

ARTICLES 35  
& 36

**Authorize the Amherst Conservation Commission to expend funds to qualified organizations**

*Shall the town vote to adopt the provisions of RSA 36-A:4-a, I(b) to authorize the conservation commission to expend funds for contributions to ‘qualified organizations’ for the purchase of property interests, or facilitating transactions related thereto, where the property interest is to be held by the qualified organization and the town will retain no interest in the property?*

***The Board of Selectmen , by a vote of 4-1, recommends a yes vote.***

*and*

**Authorize the Amherst Conservation Commission to expend funds for land purchases outside Amherst**

*Shall the town vote to adopt the provisions of RSA 36-A:4-a, I(a) to authorize the conservation commission to expend funds to purchase interests in land outside the boundaries of our municipality, subject to the approval of the local governing body?*

***The Board of Selectmen , by a vote of 4-1, recommends a yes vote.***

Warrant Articles 35 and 36 are both proposed by the Amherst Conservation Commission (ACC) and neither will have a tax impact. They are both designed to facilitate the ACC’s efforts to preserve open, natural spaces. The two articles apply to funds already in the Conservation Fund. Both Articles enable the ACC to take advantage of new provisions in state law designed to aid in negotiations with land owners. Article 35 would allow ACC to partner with another ‘qualified organization’ to preserve open space in Amherst. The ACC is committed, as a condition of providing funds, to make sure that the overall transaction would benefit the Town of Amherst. Article 36 would allow ACC (subject to the approval of the local governing body) to purchase land rights outside of the boundaries of Amherst. This article is requested so that ACC could purchase property, the majority of which is in the town of Amherst, but where a portion of the property extends into an adjacent town. There is precedent for ACC to manage land across the town boundary as Amherst presently owns lands managed by ACC in Bedford and Merrimack.

The ability for ACC to work with other qualified conservation organizations and the ability to expeditiously protect parcels which

may span the town line will be important tools in the town’s land protection toolbox. In real estate transactions time is invariably “of the essence” and sellers may not be able to wait for the next Town Meeting to close a deal. Passage of Articles 35 and 36 will remove potential obstacles and uncertainties from the town’s efforts to preserve natural spaces.

ARTICLE 37

**Library Operating Budget (By Petition)**

*To see if the Town will raise and appropriate the sum of \$1 to defray the costs of the operation of the library*

*and*

ARTICLE 38

**Library Operating Budget as a Separate Warrant Article (By Petition)**

*Shall the Town vote to express a ‘sense of the voter’ resolution requesting the Board of Selectmen and Library Board of Trustees in future years, to schedule a special joint meeting prior to the final budget submission in order to facilitate increased communication between these two boards and to provide an additional opportunity for citizens input regarding the overall library budget and goals.*

***The Board of Selectman encourages all voters to research each Petition Warrant Article***



C-Jeff Hall Photography

***Town Reports are available at***

***Amherst Town Hall***

***Amherst Library***

***and***

***Amherst Police Department.***

## **WAYS & MEANS REPORT**

**\*\*The full Ways and Means Annual Report can be found in the Town Annual Report \*\***

Warrant Article Positions: For clarification, Ways and Means took no position on articles with no tax impact. The votes below are listed in sequence “for-opposed-undecided”.

### 22. Bridge Replacement Bond: 7-0-0

- a. This is similar to our road rebuilding needs in town; our bridges are failing and need to be repaired. Roads you can travel on regardless of condition, however, bridges can and may well be closed, which can impair access to areas of town effecting safety.
- b. Up to 80% of the cost for bridge repair may be reimbursed by the state, although at some point in the future.
- c. This requested amount may be reduced by the cost of the bridge on New Boston Road over Beaver Brook . This bridge has already been repaired in-house by our DPW and is awaiting State certification. This process must wait until the water level drops later in the year so the bridge structure can be re-examined..
- d. The best example of how critical this article is to be passed is the bridge just down the street from Town Hall, where Beaver Brook goes under Manchester Street. This is a real cross-road between sections of town, and as it stands now, larger vehicles can not currently cross the bridge. This includes larger snow plows, fire trucks, and so forth which must now detour around to gain access to the Mack Hill area. This is certainly an inconvenience, but for Fire and EMS, could make the difference in saving a house, or a person.

### 23. Town Operating Budget: 7-0-0

Ways and Means has unanimously voted to support the budget and we urge our citizens to vote for this budget.

The Town budget has been significantly underfunded over the last several years, and has not grown to keep up with the true needs of Amherst. The effects of this were manifested in the approval last year of the \$15 million bond to totally rebuild miles of town road. This is a process that is at least 10 times more expensive per mile than just maintaining the roads from year to year. We have been penny-wise and pound-foolish in this area and others. We are reduced to buying used trucks and then throwing good money after bad to try and keep them running. We have no place to pull them inside, to shelter, maintain and wash the salt off them during the winter, and these kinds of problems go on and on.

Ways & Means is charged to work with and advise the department heads and the Board of Selectmen, and then to recommend the best votes for the Amherst voters. Not necessarily the cheapest budget, and certainly not the one that fails to cover the fundamental needs of our Town, but the budget that best balances the true needs of Amherst, both now and across multiple years.

Over the last year, Ways and Means, the Board of Selectmen, and the Town Department Heads have discussed the past underfunded budgets and have mutually resolved to begin correcting this issue. It will take multiple years to bring the budget back to the level that really addresses current Town needs.

Voters could choose alternative paths, including the default budget. But since the budget is not yet up to being fully funded, there will be no fat to cut at our current service levels. We will only add more miles of roads to be totally rebuilt at tremendous cost, or we will have to lay people off because of the reduced size of the default budget, or programs will have to be cut that Amherst citizens have supported for years. .

Ways and Means would have preferred a higher budget this year to reduce the budget gap more quickly. The Board of Selectmen, while respecting our priorities for the most critical departments, felt that they had to take a smaller step in these economic times. We might disagree with the timing of this catch-up process, but we do not disagree that it must take place or the Town will continue to suffer large, one-time expenses as a consequence. Above all else, we can not afford a default budget. To slip further into the financial hole will only make it harder, longer, and more expensive to climb out.

We urge the voters to support the Town budget; it is critical to our infrastructure, to our emergency departments, and to the quality of life that we have enjoyed in Amherst.

### 24. Police Contract: 7-0-0

Ways and Means supports the contract as proposed. Our Police men and women have been working without

a contract for the last 4 years, and we fully support this negotiated agreement.

### 25. Public Health Mosquito Surveillance and Control Program: 5-2-0

- a. For
  - i. EEE and West Nile are serious diseases which have been identified in towns surrounding us. The majority of the committee is concerned and feels that we need to take steps to ensure everyone’s safety. One of the first steps in this process is to identify what species of mosquitoes we have locally. If we find the disease carrying variety, then further steps can be taken. We would also encourage all the residents to take ownership of their safety by taking the necessary steps to protect themselves by controlling standing water that can be breeding grounds (in buckets, old tires, wheel barrows, etc.).
  - ii. Most on Ways and Means support this being part of the budget rather than a warrant article.
- b. Against
  - i. Touted as a safety issue, and promoted under the banner of safety which often obscures the fact of how necessary this program really is. Not convinced there is a serious safety issue. If it is that serious/important, it should be in the town budget.
  - ii. Even though we had a dry year, we still had mosquitoes and standing water, so the comment about not getting many statistics because of the hot dry summer is not resonating with some.
  - iii. Doesn’t see the validity of spending the money on a “maybe”. The Town Health Officer does not support putting it in the budget which diminishes the credibility/seriousness of the issue.

### 26. Lease / Purchase of Rescue/Pumper for Fire Department: 7-0-0

- a. The one we have now is a 1987 Pierce Engine and has passed its documented life expectancy. There are multiple and deep areas of rust which needed attention in order to pass inspection.
- b. If this Engine is not replaced, new tires will need to be purchased at a minimum, so why put those dollars into tires for a truck that needs to be replaced.



- c. This Rescue/Pumper will become more important just about when we will have it delivered. We have several new Firemen volunteers coming aboard and going into training. They will be ready at about the same time as the new truck. This will help support the 101A corridor for auto accident response, EMS support, and Fire calls to our “big box store” area.

30. Ambulance Capital Reserve: 7-0-0

a. Ways and Means supports this prudent savings mechanism as an effective manner to fund this capital purchase. This helps to spread and minimize the tax impact over time rather than paying a large purchase in one lump sum, which spikes the tax effect into one year.

b. Our EMS Director has changed the way the Town will replace the ambulances now to help spread out the tax impact. Instead of replacing them both at once, the new ambulances will be purchased 3 years apart.

31. Communications Center Capital Reserve Fund: 7-0-0

a. At some point, we will need to replace our existing tower and this funding mechanism will ensure the monies are available at that time.

b. These funds would also help to replace equipment in the dispatch center as needed.

32. Town Computer System Capital Reserve Fund: 7-0-0

This fund is for the replacement of hardware/software in the event of an emergency. Should town technology be affected by a emergency outage related to lighting/flood/or other event, this could require the replacement of hardware leading to software upgrades for compatibility requirements. This kind of emergency expense could require considerable funding.

33. Souhegan Valley Transportation Collaborative: 7-0-0

a. This is a regional transportation issue which Ways and Means supports and which needs the support of Amherst voters. Passage will assist in allowing residents to "age in place", allowing residents to live at home longer, help to lessen the need for public funding of long-term care alternatives, and allow older residents and individuals with disabilities to function in our mobile society. This service is equally as important as our library, recreation department, and EMS capability.

b.The SVTC provides wheelchair accessible, non-emergency transportation, primarily for healthcare and social services-related ap-

pointments and other essential activities of daily living. The participating towns are Amherst, Brookline, Hollis, and Milford. It is available to any Amherst citizen. It operates three days per week, eight hours per day, to destinations within the participating towns and to Nashua. The goal is to expand the service to five days per week and provide additional destinations. The service is funded primarily by these towns prorated by the number of users in each town. The users also pay a nominal fee. Brookline, Hollis, and Milford have funded this service for the past two years. Amherst funding was provided last year by an anonymous donor. Last year Amherst ridership almost doubled to 189 rides. About 71% of the rides were provided to female passengers. 31% of the riders use some kind of assistance device such as a cane, walker, wheelchair or scooter. The percentage of rides provided to seniors has decreased from about 73% to 68%, suggesting an emerging trend in increased use of the service by younger residents.

34. Health and Human Service Agencies: 5-2-0

As this article was amended at the Deliberative Session, please see the Town Report for Ways and Means comments prior to amendment.

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## Be a part of your community!!

Amherst is able to maintain its small town feel and lower taxes by the spirit of community involvement and volunteerism that exists. You can do your part and gain personal fulfillment by volunteering your time and talents in a variety of areas.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
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| <p><i>Always wanted to be involved in high tech TV production? Consider volunteering with Amherst Community Television and helping to produce the excellent content our local community access channels televise. Contact the group at <a href="mailto:ACTV20@amherstnh.gov">ACTV20@amherstnh.gov</a></i></p> <p><i>Amherst is one of the few remaining towns in the State of NH with a population over 10,000 that continues to provide fire protection and emergency response to its citizens with a predominantly paid-on-call (volunteer) fire department. This is extraordinary and is due to the pride-spirit-tradition and dedication of the Amherst Fire Department members! Applications for Call Firefighters are always welcome. Call or stop by the Central Fire Station during normal business hours if you are interested in serving your community as a firefighter.</i></p> <p><i>There are numerous boards, committees, and commissions that make your local government function. Most of these groups are made up of citizen volunteers who are appointed by the Board of Selectmen during the month of April. You can review a list of</i></p> | <p><i>these groups and any anticipated vacancies in the annual town report that was just published. Email <a href="mailto:sfrydlo@amherstnh.gov">sfrydlo@amherstnh.gov</a> if you'd like to be considered by the Board for upcoming openings.</i></p> <p><i>Amherst created a regional Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) that is made up of volunteers from Amherst and surrounding communities. These people receive training in many areas of emergency management and are available to respond as a resource to assist their fellow citizens during emergencies by performing duties under the direction of the town's emergency services. If you are interested, email <a href="mailto:mboynton@amherstnh.gov">mboynton@amherstnh.gov</a> for additional information.</i></p> <p><i>Do you have an interest in being part of the team of volunteers who work so hard to bring you events like the Fourth of July Celebration, the Memorial Day Observance, or the annual tree lighting ceremony? Email <a href="mailto:sfrydlo@amherstnh.gov">sfrydlo@amherstnh.gov</a> to be put in touch with those groups.</i></p> |
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# HELPFUL INFORMATION FOR VOTERS

## TOWN TAX COMMITMENT COMPARISON

|                         | <u>Amherst</u> | <u>Exeter</u> | <u>Goffstown</u> | <u>Hanover</u> | <u>Hollis</u> | <u>Milford</u> | <u>Pelham</u> | <u>Windham</u> |
|-------------------------|----------------|---------------|------------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| 2007 Population         | 11,714         | 14,735        | 17,632           | 11,064         | 7,738         | 15,011         | 12,504        | 13,137         |
| Square Mileage          | 34.8           | 19.8          | 37.1             | 49.1           | 31.8          | 25.4           | 26.3          | 26.7           |
| Town Tax Commitment*    | 5,680,335      | 9,995,540     | 11,577,300       | 7,222,960      | 5,758,090     | 6,837,497      | 7,080,460     | 7,348,319      |
| Total Tax Commitment*   | 35,990,433     | 34,680,586    | 30,754,050       | 31,608,428     | 26,174,406    | 28,785,774     | 26,321,229    | 38,978,070     |
| Town Percentage of Tax* | 15.8           | 28.8          | 37.6             | 22.9           | 22.0          | 23.8           | 26.9          | 18.9           |

\*5 Year Average 2006-2010

## HOW DOES AMHERST COMPARE?

*Using the information provided on the web site for the New Hampshire Department of Revenue Administration, the Town was able to compile the figures needed to develop a direct comparison of the town portion of the tax commitment for several communities similar to the town of Amherst. The town tax commitment represents the portion to be raised by property taxes for the purposes of running the town departments. As you can see, Amherst is far below what many of the comparable communities have expended on average over the last 5 years.*

*In addition, the percentage of tax dollars needed to operate the town departments when compared to the total tax commitment are significantly less than the comparable communities. The Town of Amherst continues to make every effort to maintain a high level of service to the residents of Amherst while keeping costs as low as possible.*

Data found at: <http://www.nh.gov/revenue>

TOWN OF AMHERST  
PROPOSED FY 2012 BUDGET

TOWN OF AMHERST  
FY 2012 ANTICIPATED REVENUES

|                                              | FY 11<br>Adopted<br>Budget | Proposed FY<br>2012 Budget | Dollar<br>Change  | % Change    |                                                | FY 2011<br>Anticipated | FY 2012<br>Proposed  | Dollar<br>Change | %<br>Change  |
|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|------------------|--------------|
| General Government Executive                 | 334,483.51                 | 326,030.67                 | -8,452.85         | -2.53       |                                                |                        |                      |                  |              |
| Election, Registration, and Vital Statistics | 125,657.36                 | 129,554.77                 | 3,897.41          | 3.10        | Land Use Change Tax                            | 50,000.00              | 50,000.00            | 0.00             | 0.00         |
| Financial Administration                     | 158,698.25                 | 162,020.00                 | 3,321.74          | 2.09        | Timber Tax                                     | 3,000.00               | 3,000.00             | 0.00             | 0.00         |
| Tax Collection                               | 95,954.53                  | 98,599.40                  | 2,644.87          | 2.76        | Payment in Lieu of Taxes                       | 23,935.00              | 24,239.00            | 304.00           | 1.27         |
| Assessing and Revaluation of Property        | 175,820.52                 | 221,783.04                 | 45,962.51         | 26.14       | Other Taxes (Elderly & Welfare Liens Redeemed) | -0.00                  | 0.00                 | 0.00             | 0.00         |
| Legal Expenses                               | 76,000.00                  | 76,000.00                  | 0.00              | 0.00        | Interest & Penalties on Delinquent Taxes       | 150,000.00             | 150,100.00           | 100.00           | 0.07         |
| Personnel Administration / Insurance         | 140,312.68                 | 154,400.00                 | 14,087.32         | 10.04       | Business Licenses & Permits                    | 147,500.00             | 155,000.00           | 7,500.00         | 5.08         |
| Planning Board                               | 18,050.00                  | 18,050.00                  | 0.00              | 0.00        | Motor Vehicle Permit Fees                      | 2,224,000.00           | 2,179,200.00         | -44,800.00       | -2.01        |
| Zoning Department                            | 215,045.34                 | 219,917.33                 | 4,871.99          | 2.27        | Permit Fee Revenue                             | 104,700.00             | 140,600.00           | 35,900.00        | 34.29        |
| General Government Buildings                 | 274,983.13                 | 273,916.65                 | -1,066.48         | -0.39       | Other Licenses, Permits, & Fees                | 20,250.00              | 21,460.00            | 1,210.00         | 5.98         |
| Cemeteries                                   | 45,755.23                  | 46,144.21                  | 388.98            | 0.85        | Federal Grants or Reimbursements               | 1,300.00               | 1,300.00             | 0.00             | 0.00         |
| Property / Liability Insurance               | 88,902.00                  | 81,480.00                  | -7,422.00         | -8.35       | Shared Revenues                                | -0.00                  | 0.00                 | 0.00             | 0.00         |
| Police Department                            | 1,887,181.97               | 1,938,883.99               | 51,702.02         | 2.74        | Meals & Rooms Tax Distribution                 | 518,586.00             | 517,936.00           | -650.00          | -0.13        |
| Emergency Medical Services                   | 471,968.45                 | 493,101.69                 | 21,133.24         | 4.48        | Highway Block Grant                            | 329,005.00             | 337,865.34           | 8,860.34         | 2.69         |
| Fire Department                              | 422,010.03                 | 488,254.70                 | 66,244.67         | 15.70       | Water Pollution Grant                          | -0.00                  | 0.00                 | 0.00             | 0.00         |
| Emergency Management                         | 7,715.30                   | 7,715.00                   | -0.30             | -0.00       | State & Federal Forest Land Reimbursement      | 23.00                  | 26.00                | 3.00             | 13.04        |
| Public Safety Communications                 | 361,957.03                 | 379,195.11                 | 17,238.08         | 4.76        | Other                                          | 781.00                 | 781.00               | 0.00             | 0.00         |
| Public Works Administration                  | 362,740.73                 | 367,013.53                 | 4,272.81          | 1.18        | Other Intergovernmental Revenue                | 70,200.00              | 70,200.00            | 0.00             | 0.00         |
| Department of Public Works                   | 2,349,317.11               | 2,550,846.31               | 201,529.20        | 8.58        | Income from Departments                        | 281,250.00             | 275,576.00           | -5,674.00        | -2.02        |
| Street Lighting                              | 26,679.82                  | 26,679.82                  | 0.00              | 0.00        | Septic Usage Charge                            | -0.00                  | 0.00                 | 0.00             | 0.00         |
| Souhegan Regional Landfill District          | 444,732.14                 | 300,908.16                 | -143,823.98       | -32.34      | Landfill Income                                | 95,000.00              | 100,050.00           | 5,050.00         | 5.32         |
| Landfill Department                          | 290,034.47                 | 290,729.58                 | 695.11            | 0.24        | Sale of Municipal Property                     | 7,000.00               | 6,000.00             | -1,000.00        | -14.29       |
| Health Administration                        | 1,941.35                   | 1,941.35                   | 0.00              | 0.00        | Interest on Investments                        | 70,000.00              | 30,000.00            | -40,000.00       | -57.14       |
| Animal Control (Dog Officer)                 | 400.00                     | 400.00                     | 0.00              | 0.00        | Fines and Forfeits                             | 11,775.00              | 9,600.00             | -2,175.00        | -18.47       |
| Health Agencies and Hospitals                | 0.00                       | 46,996.00                  | 46,996.00         | 100.00      | Insurance Dividends and Reimbursements         | -0.00                  | 0.00                 | 0.00             | 0.00         |
| Welfare (Direct Assistance)                  | 26,000.00                  | 21,750.00                  | -4,250.00         | -16.35      | Contributions and Donations                    | -0.00                  | 3.00                 | 3.00             | 0.00         |
| Recreation Department                        | 306,992.83                 | 313,396.55                 | 6,403.72          | 2.09        | Miscellaneous                                  | -0.00                  | 1.00                 | 1.00             | 0.00         |
| Parks and Grounds                            | 15,608.75                  | 15,772.54                  | 163.79            | 1.05        |                                                | <b>4,108,305.00</b>    | <b>-4,072,937.34</b> | <b>35,367.66</b> | <b>-0.86</b> |
| Peabody Mill Environmental Center            | 24,500.00                  | 24,500.00                  | 0.00              | 0.00        |                                                |                        |                      |                  |              |
| Library                                      | 819,198.70                 | 816,434.29                 | -2,764.41         | -0.34       |                                                |                        |                      |                  |              |
| Patriotic Purposes                           | 9,000.00                   | 9,000.00                   | 0.00              | 0.00        |                                                |                        |                      |                  |              |
| Amherst Heritage Commission                  | 535.00                     | 455.00                     | -80.00            | -14.95      |                                                |                        |                      |                  |              |
| Conservation Commission                      | 8,000.00                   | 8,000.00                   | 0.00              | 0.00        |                                                |                        |                      |                  |              |
| Principal - Long Term Bonds and Notes        | 144,156.70                 | 327,490.03                 | 183,333.33        | 127.18      |                                                |                        |                      |                  |              |
| Interest - Long Term Bonds and Notes         | 30,311.61                  | 109,205.46                 | 78,893.85         | 260.28      |                                                |                        |                      |                  |              |
|                                              | <b>9,760,644.54</b>        | <b>10,346,565.18</b>       | <b>585,920.64</b> | <b>6.00</b> |                                                |                        |                      |                  |              |

# Town of Amherst Budget Info Sheet

## Delivering our commitments

The Amherst Board of Selectmen, Town Administrator and Department Heads are fully committed to providing high quality, cost efficient municipal services to the community. The proposed town budget responsibly addresses the infrastructure needs of the community, employee retention and customer satisfaction without compromising existing levels of service.

### Did you know?

approximately 17¢ of every tax dollar you pay remains with the town to provide municipal services to nearly 12,000 residents annually.

- **Based on a \$400,000 home:**

the proposed operationing budget increase translates to a total annual tax increase cost of approximately \$84.

apart from the operationing budget warrant article, if all additional warrant articles supported by the Board of Selectmen pass, the annual cost to the homeowner will be about \$128

- **Based on a \$400,000 home every year the Town Departments:**

protect and support your family with 24/7 police response for about \$271 a year, which is less than the cost of an intrusion alarm monitoring fee for one year.

respond to about 600 ambulance calls per year with 24/7 paramedic service for about \$69 per year, which is less than an annual physical.

enroll more than 3,500 participants in our recreation programs each year promoting good health, fitness and environmental education for about \$47 a year, or less than an adult one-day ski pass.

provide services to more than 7,000 patrons in our adult and children’s library for about \$114 a year, which is less than the cost of a *Kindle* reading device.

protect our homes and businesses with on-call fire-fighters handling more than 500 annual calls for about \$68 a year, or about the cost of a quality fire extinguisher.

maintain and improve over 120 miles of roads through a department of public works committed to meeting the expectations of the community, for about \$407 or less than the cost of annual lawn care and/or residential snow plowing .

- **Warrant Article 22: Bridge Replacement Bond**

Support of this article gives the town the ability to proactively repair current *Red Listed* town bridges and not experience the year plus road closure and inconveniences the Town of Bedford is now experiencing. For about \$61 a year, or less than two fill-ups at the gas station, this bond addresses a significant infrastructure issue before more travel restrictions are required.

## Looking to the future

With increasing financial demands from an aging infrastructure, continually escalating insurance & operational costs and declining revenues, the challenge to deliver high quality municipal government, public safety and cultural services in Amherst is greater than ever. The proposed budget begins the foundation for this plan and delivers on efficiency, accountability and transparency, without compromising existing levels of service.



**Allocation of the 17% of Property Taxes Paid by Town Category  
on a \$400K Home**

| Operating Budget By Category                 | Proposed 2012 Budget | % of Total Tax | Taxes by Department |
|----------------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| General Government Administration            | \$ 655,366           | 1.08%          | \$ 92               |
| Election, Registration, and Vital Statistics | \$ 129,555           | 0.21%          | \$ 18               |
| Financial and Tax Administration             | \$ 260,619           | 0.43%          | \$ 36               |
| Assessing and Revaluation of Property        | \$ 221,783           | 0.36%          | \$ 31               |
| Planning Board and Zoning                    | \$ 237,967           | 0.39%          | \$ 34               |
| Department of Public Works                   | \$ 3,872,011         | 6.36%          | \$ 542              |
| Police Department                            | \$ 1,939,284         | 3.19%          | \$ 271              |
| Emergency Medical Services                   | \$ 495,043           | 0.81%          | \$ 69               |
| Fire and Emergency Management                | \$ 495,970           | 0.81%          | \$ 70               |
| Public Safety Communications                 | \$ 379,195           | 0.62%          | \$ 53               |
| Welfare/Health Agencies                      | \$ 68,746            | 0.10%          | \$ 10               |
| Recreational Departments                     | \$ 337,897           | 0.56%          | \$ 47               |
| Library                                      | \$ 816,434           | 1.34%          | \$ 114              |
| Debt Service                                 | \$ 436,695           | 0.72%          | \$ 61               |
| Total Proposed Operating Budget              | \$ 10,346,565        | 17.00%         | \$ 1,448            |

**Tax Impact of Warrant Articles on a \$400K Home**

| Warrant #  | Tax Impact - Warrant Articles                                      | Proposed 2012 Warrant Articles | % of Total 2012 Warrant Articles | \$400K Home |
|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------|
| Article 22 | Bridge Replacement Bond (10Yr)                                     | 283,535                        | 47.47%                           | \$ 60.77    |
| Article 24 | Police Union Contract                                              | 81,988                         | 13.73%                           | \$ 17.57    |
| Article 25 | Public Health Mosquito Surveillance & Control Program              | 40,000                         | 6.70%                            | \$ 8.57     |
| Article 26 | Lease/Purchase Resuce/Pumper for Fire Dept                         | 154,223                        | 25.82%                           | \$ 33.05    |
| Article 27 | Funding for Recreation Land Purchase-LUCT Fund to CR               | -                              | 0.00%                            | \$ -        |
| Article 28 | Discontinue Cemetery CR                                            | -                              | 0.00%                            | \$ -        |
| Article 29 | Establish Forest View Cemetery Design Expend. Trust                | -                              | 0.00%                            | \$ -        |
| Article 30 | Ambulance Capital Reserve                                          | 22,000                         | 3.68%                            | \$ 4.71     |
| Article 31 | Communication Center Capital Reserve                               | 5,000                          | 0.84%                            | \$ 1.07     |
| Article 32 | Town Computer Capital Reserve                                      | 5,000                          | 0.84%                            | \$ 1.07     |
| Article 33 | Souhegan Valley Transportation Collaborative Subsidy               | 5,500                          | 0.92%                            | \$ 1.18     |
| Article 34 | Health and Human Services Agencies                                 | 1                              | 0.00%                            | \$ -        |
| Article 35 | Authorize Conservation Commission to Expend Funds                  | -                              | 0.00%                            | \$ -        |
| Article 36 | Authorize Conservation Commission to Expend Funds                  | -                              | 0.00%                            | \$ -        |
| Article 37 | BY PETITION - Library Operating Budget                             | 1                              | 0.00%                            | \$ -        |
| Article 38 | BY PETITION - Library Operating Budget as Separate Warrant Article | -                              | 0.00%                            | \$ -        |
|            | Total Proposed Warrant Articles                                    | 597,248                        | 100.00%                          | \$ 128.00   |



## Amherst CodeRED Emergency System

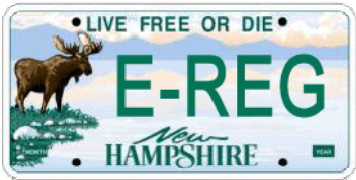
The Amherst Public Safety Communications Center utilizes a public alert system, **CodeRED**, which allows residents to receive timely notification by phone of weather related disasters, such as evacuation notices or dangerous conditions in our community, missing children alerts and/or pandemic flu awareness. **CodeRED** gives the town the ability to deliver pre-recorded emergency phone notifications and messages to either targeted areas of the town or to the entire community at a rate of up to 60,000 calls per hour. The system not only delivers important messages faster, it gives individuals the ability to add their own phone numbers directly to the system’s telephone database.

The system however is only as good as the telephone database supporting it, so it is critical for our residents and businesses to make sure that they provide accurate and up to date contact information or they will not be called. It is especially critical for those who have moved to a new address or changed phone numbers in the past three months, who have an unlisted phone number or who use a cell phone as their main home or business line.

Residents can easily register any desired phone numbers by completing a brief online form. To sign up, visit the town’s website [www.AmherstNH.gov](http://www.AmherstNH.gov) and click on the **CodeRED logo** to register. You can additionally register via the Amherst Police Department website [www.AmherstPolice.com](http://www.AmherstPolice.com) and click on the **CodeRED** link. Other information on that page further describes the program and how it works. Those without website access can contact the Amherst Communications Center at 673-4900 from 8 am-5 pm on Monday-Friday to provide their information by phone.

## Property Tax Exemptions Are Available

Now is the time to file for property tax exemptions available through the Town of Amherst Assessing and Tax Office. The Town of Amherst has adopted several property tax exemptions and tax credits over the years that may benefit our qualifying elderly residents, veterans and more. These exemptions and the qualifying criteria for them are mandated by State Statute. Please contact the Town of Amherst Assessing Office or Tax Office at 673-6041 Ext. 201 or 202, with any questions you may have, or to obtain an application. Applications must be received prior to April 15, 2011 to qualify for the upcoming 2011 property tax year. Details regarding these exemptions are also available on the Town website at [www.AmherstNH.gov](http://www.AmherstNH.gov).



## Online Vehicle Registration

The Town of Amherst offers online motor vehicle registration through the *E-Reg* system. This system is offered as a convenience to our residents and will cost up to an additional \$1.85 to cover the costs of the online registrar. At present, online registration must be paid with an online check or bank transfer; with the hope that credit cards may be supported in the future. You may also still register your car in person at the town hall, or by mail, as explained in your renewal notice. Only a renewal of an existing registration may be done online; registration of a new vehicle must be done in person at the town hall.



## Online Dog Licenses

You can now renew your dog license online. Enter just one of your license numbers and all your dogs will come up for your review. There is a convenience fee that is charged should you choose this service. Visit the town web site and click on the icon to learn more



# WELCOME TO AMHERST, NEW HAMPSHIRE



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### Recent Town Notes & Advisories

Town Councilor Meeting

On Wednesday, February 16th, the Town of Amherst Councilors will convene and work on this year's budget. With the state of the economy, this is going ... [\[Read More\]](#)

Town Deliberative Session – Feb 9th @7PM

TOWN OF AMHERST PUBLIC NOTICE The Town's Deliberative Session will be held on Wednesday, February 9, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. at the ... [\[Read More...\]](#)

Snow Removal Advisory

Beginning Saturday night through Sunday evening, Public Works will be plowing streets and clearing side walks for the upcoming school day on Monday. ... [\[Read More...\]](#)



The Town of Amherst is located in the southern tier of the State of New Hampshire within Hillsborough County. As far as regions of the state, Amherst is located on the western edge of the Merrimack Valley and the eastern edge of the Monadnock region. It is equidistant to the two largest cities in New Hampshire, Manchester and Nashua, being less than 15 miles to the downtowns of both cities.

There are two major east/west state highways (Route 101 and 101-A) that pass through Amherst and provide easy access to the main north/south routes in the state (US Route 3 and Interstate 93). In addition, Amherst is less than 15 miles from the Manchester-Boston Regional Airport which provides direct and connecting service to most major airports.

With a population of approximately 12,000 residents and a land area of nearly 35 square miles, Amherst is a growing suburban community that has successfully maintained many desirable rural characteristics. The town has seen growth in commercial development over the last several years, and has a vibrant business district adjacent to the Route 101-A corridor that is home to several national retailers. There is a significant amount of undeveloped industrial land in the same area of town, that is also home to several existing businesses ranging from start-ups to a large regional warehousing operation.

Amherst has a long and rich colonial history. It was first chartered in 1728 as Narragansett Number 3 and later called Souhegan Number 3. In January, 1760 it was chartered as Amherst and named for General Jeffrey Amherst, the commander-in-chief of the British forces in America at the time. Amherst became the first seat of Hillsborough County when the county was formed in 1769. The central village contained the courthouse, complete with jail, pillory and whipping post. [\[Read More...\]](#)

### Amherst New Hampshire

|  |       |             |
|--|-------|-------------|
|  | Today | 47°F / 35°F |
|  | Fri   | 50°F / 20°F |
|  | Sat   | 34°F / 14°F |
|  | Sun   | 35°F / 10°F |

### Amherst CodeRED



### Local Access T.V.



Access Channel Television  
*"YOUR COMMUNITY ON THE AIR"*

### Calendar

February 2011

| S  | M  | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
|    |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |
| 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27 | 28 |    |    |    |    |    |

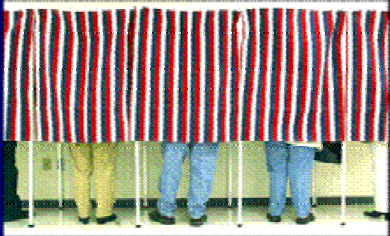
< Jan

For your convenience, the Board of Selectmen encourages you to use the ballot summary sheet below and bring it with you to the voting polls on March 8, 2011

|                                                                                            | <u>YES</u> | <u>NO</u> |                                                                                                        | <u>YES</u> | <u>NO</u> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-----------|
| Article 22: Bridge Replacement Bond                                                        | _____      | _____     | Article 32: Town Computer Capital Reserve                                                              | _____      | _____     |
| Article 23: Operating Budget                                                               | _____      | _____     | Article 33: Souhegan Valley Transportation Collaborative Subsidy                                       | _____      | _____     |
| Article 24: Police Union Contract                                                          | _____      | _____     | Article 34: Health and Human Service Agencies                                                          | _____      | _____     |
| Article 25: Public Health Mosquito Surveillance and Control                                | _____      | _____     | Article 35: Authorize Amherst Conservation Comm to expend funds to qualified Organizations             | _____      | _____     |
| Article 26: Lease/Purchase of Rescue/Pumper for Fire Department                            | _____      | _____     | Article 36: Authorize the Amherst Conservation Comm to expend funds for land purchases outside Amherst | _____      | _____     |
| Article 27: Funding for Recreation Land Purchase-Transfer for LUCT Fund to Capital Reserve | _____      | _____     | Article 37: BY PETITION- Library Operating Budget                                                      | _____      | _____     |
| Article 28: Discontinue Cemetery Capital Reserve Fund                                      | _____      | _____     | Article 38: BY PETITION- Library Operating Budget as a Separate Warrant Article                        | _____      | _____     |
| Article 29: Establish Forestview Cemetery Design Expendable Trust                          | _____      | _____     |                                                                                                        |            |           |
| Article 30: Ambulance Capital Reserve                                                      | _____      | _____     |                                                                                                        |            |           |
| Article 31: Comm Ctr Capital Reserve                                                       | _____      | _____     |                                                                                                        |            |           |



*Please make sure your voice is heard  
and cast your ballot at the second  
session of the Town Meeting  
(voting day)*



- Tuesday, March 8, 2011
- 6:00 AM to 8:00 PM
- Souhegan High School

63

